

Aggieland

ILLUSTRATED

ALSO INSIDE

FOOTBALL REWIND
ADDIE MCCAIN
KYLE FIELD SAFETY
AND MORE...

HIGH HOPES

CHAPMAN FLIES PAST GATOR DEFENDER
FOR SEASON CHANGING SCORE



0 74470 22517 1

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020 • \$3.95



Full Service Mechanic Shop
All Wheel Drive Dynamometer
Foreign and Domestic Repair

All General Maintenance
ASE Certified Staff
Veteran Owned and Operated

979-330-5007
4160 Hwy 6 College Station, TX
aaronautomotivebcs.com

A large group photograph of a construction or renovation crew. They are all wearing bright yellow safety vests over dark shirts. In the background, there is a large black banner with white and red text. The banner reads "ABA SERVICES" in large letters, "COMMERCIAL DRYWALL & PAINT" below it, and the phone number "(979) 704-3077" at the bottom. At the bottom of the image, there is a large, bold, white text overlay that says "WE'RE EXCITED TO WELCOME BACK TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS".

ABA SERVICES
COMMERCIAL DRYWALL & PAINT
(979) 704-3077

WE'RE EXCITED TO WELCOME BACK
TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS

contents



FEATURES

15

Q&A WITH ADDIE MCCAIN

We sat down with the talented senior after game one of the season.

18

KYLE FIELD SAFETY

Kevin Hurley gave the media a tour of Kyle Field and explained all of the safety measures in place for games.

BY ROB HAVENS '88

21

2020 FOOTBALL REWIND

Our favorite pictures from the first six games with recaps of the action.

BY ROB HAVENS '88

29

TEXAS A&M SPORT CLUBS

AI spotlights Climbing Team and Wrestling Club.

BY ROB HAVENS '88

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 04** Publisher's Note
- 06** Snapshots
- 12** Scoreboard
- 30** The 12th Man

On the Cover: In what is arguably the biggest play of the season Caleb Chapman secures a long bomb from Mond in the endzone that changed the game and the season for Texas A&M. Photo by Bailey Orr/Texas A&M Athletics

JACK WINSLOW BODY SHOP

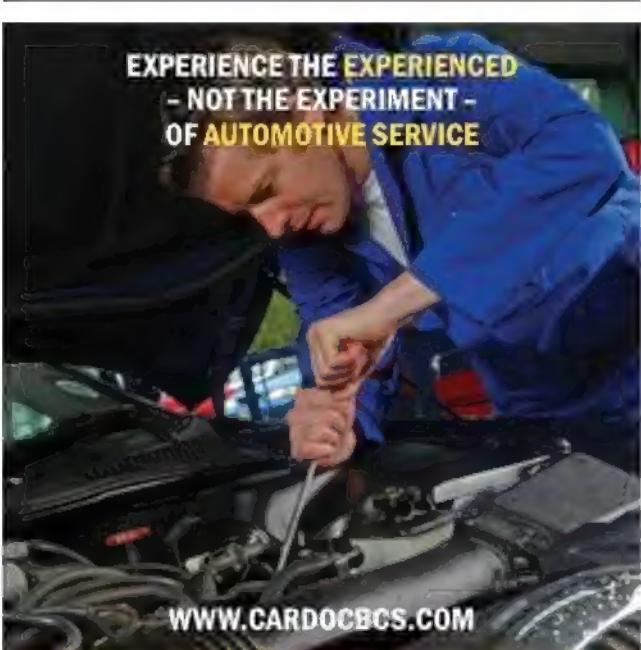
SERVING AGGIELAND FOR OVER 62 YEARS

- FREE ESTIMATES -
- INSURANCE CLAIMS WELCOME -
- OPEN 8 - 5:30, M-F -



1845 GRAHAM RD • COLLEGE STATION • 979-690-1487
WWW.JACKWINSLOWBODYSHOP.COM

EXPERIENCE THE EXPERIENCED
- NOT THE EXPERIMENT -
OF AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE



WWW.CARDOCBCS.COM

Open M-F 8-6 Sat 8-4 • Ask about our 2 year/24,000 mile labor warranty

CarDoc

979-693-8575

204-A Harvey Rd. • College Station

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED



Howdy Ags!

When I wrote my last publisher's note for our football guide issue, there was hope we would play football, but there were still a lot of uncertainties. I am so proud to say that in the time since I wrote that letter, the Aggies have played six football games and won five of them! We all owe a debt of gratitude to our student athletes for stepping up and following strict protocols in order to keep our numbers down and allow us to play. The players are being tested three times a week, and so far (knock on wood) we have been able to play every game on our schedule. Fridays have become the day that we wait patiently for the "all clear" signal that both teams testing results have been confirmed and the game the next day is on.

We also need to thank all of the behind the scenes folks that made this happen. I'm referring to the ones that came up with safety protocols that would allow us to watch games in person – from our athletic director to trainers to administrators to security staffers that make it possible for us to watch Aggie sports in our facilities.

I believe Texas A&M has been a leader in how to do this the right way. Not only has our football program done what it had to do, but our other programs have done it as well and even paved the way for in-person Aggie Sports.

Our soccer team was the first Aggie team to go on the road and win a game! They flew into a hotbed of COVID-19 as the state of Mississippi had very high positive numbers. In fact, the head football coach of Alabama, Nick Saban can thank our soccer team for the fact he was allowed to coach against Georgia this year. One of our soccer players had tested positive, so our next game was postponed and the player was quarantined as well as seven players that were deemed possibly compromised due to contact tracing.

Coach G suspected that it was a false positive and after three negative tests that proved his suspicions, she was released from "COVID JAIL" and a new protocol was established that would allow a person with a false positive to resume after three negative tests. So after Coach Saban had his false positive test he was able to resume coaching because of the path provided by our soccer program. If Nick won't say thank you, I will. Not just for Saban but for all the players and coaches out there working hard to stay safe.

I hope you enjoy this issue as we catch you up to date with all of our sports that are in full swing! We are excelling across the board, and it has been so much fun to cover the action! Stay safe and Gig'em!

God Bless & Gig'em!

Rob '88



FOR REAL-TIME UPDATES ON ALL THINGS AGGIE SPORTS, BE SURE TO FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER.



@AGGIELANDILLUSTRATED



@AGGIEMAG

Aggieland

ILLUSTRATED

PUBLISHER/EDITOR
Rob Havens '88
rob@aggiemag.com
979.229.8046

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Sarah Pyatt '14

COPY EDITORS
Chelsea O'Neal Sweat '17
Daniel Sweat

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Sarah Pyatt '14

Aggieland Illustrated is an independently owned, Aggie owned and operated publication and in no way reflects the views or opinions of Texas A&M University.

Aggieland Illustrated (ISSN 1932-9105) is published six times a year in the United States by Aggieland Illustrated, PO Box 6841, Bryan, TX 77805-6841. Reproduction or use of editorial or graphics content in any manner without permission is prohibited. Photographs and manuscripts for publication are welcome but will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Address all subscription inquiries and change of address requests to Aggieland Illustrated, PO Box 6841, Bryan, TX 77805-6841. Allow up to eight weeks for response.

©2006-2013 AGGIELAND ILLUSTRATED
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Volume 15, Number 2

979-229-8046
www.aggiemag.com

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION FOR \$18
OR 2 YEARS FOR \$32

FOUR EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE:

BY PHONE: Call us at **979-229-8046**

BY MAIL: Send your name, address and payment (check or credit card) to: Aggieland Illustrated Magazine, PO Box 6841, Bryan, TX 77805-6841.

ONLINE: Visit www.aggiemag.com

QR CODE: Scan this QR Code for quick and easy access to our subscription page



See your savings add up.



Jerry Anderson
979-764-0015
2214 Texas Ave., South
College Station
jerryanderson@allstate.com



You're in good hands.

Auto Home Life Retirement

Insurance and coverages subject to terms, qualifications and availability. Allstate Property and Casualty Insurance Co., Allstate Fire and Casualty Insurance Co., Allstate Insurance Co., Allstate Texas Lloyd's, Allstate Indemnity Co., Allstate Vehicle and Property Insurance Co. Northbrook, Illinois © 2016 Allstate Insurance Co.

CALL BINFORD FOR ALL YOUR PEST CONTROL NEEDS!



AGGIE OWNED AND OPERATED
FIGHTIN' TEXAS AGGIE CLASS OF '70, '95 & 2020

BUGGIN' BUGS SINCE 1947
binfordinsectcontrol.com
979-822-5524



KINGDOM LEATHERCRAFT
MATTHEW 6:33

WE ARE A TEXAS-BASED, FAMILY-OWNED
BUSINESS SPECIALIZING IN
100% HANDMADE LEATHER WALLETS, BAGS,
KEYCHAINS, PURSES, AND EARRINGS.
EACH PRODUCT IS MADE TO LAST A LIFETIME
AND WILL WEAR IN INSTEAD OF WEARING OUT!
LEARN MORE AT...
KINGDOMLEATHERCRAFT.COM

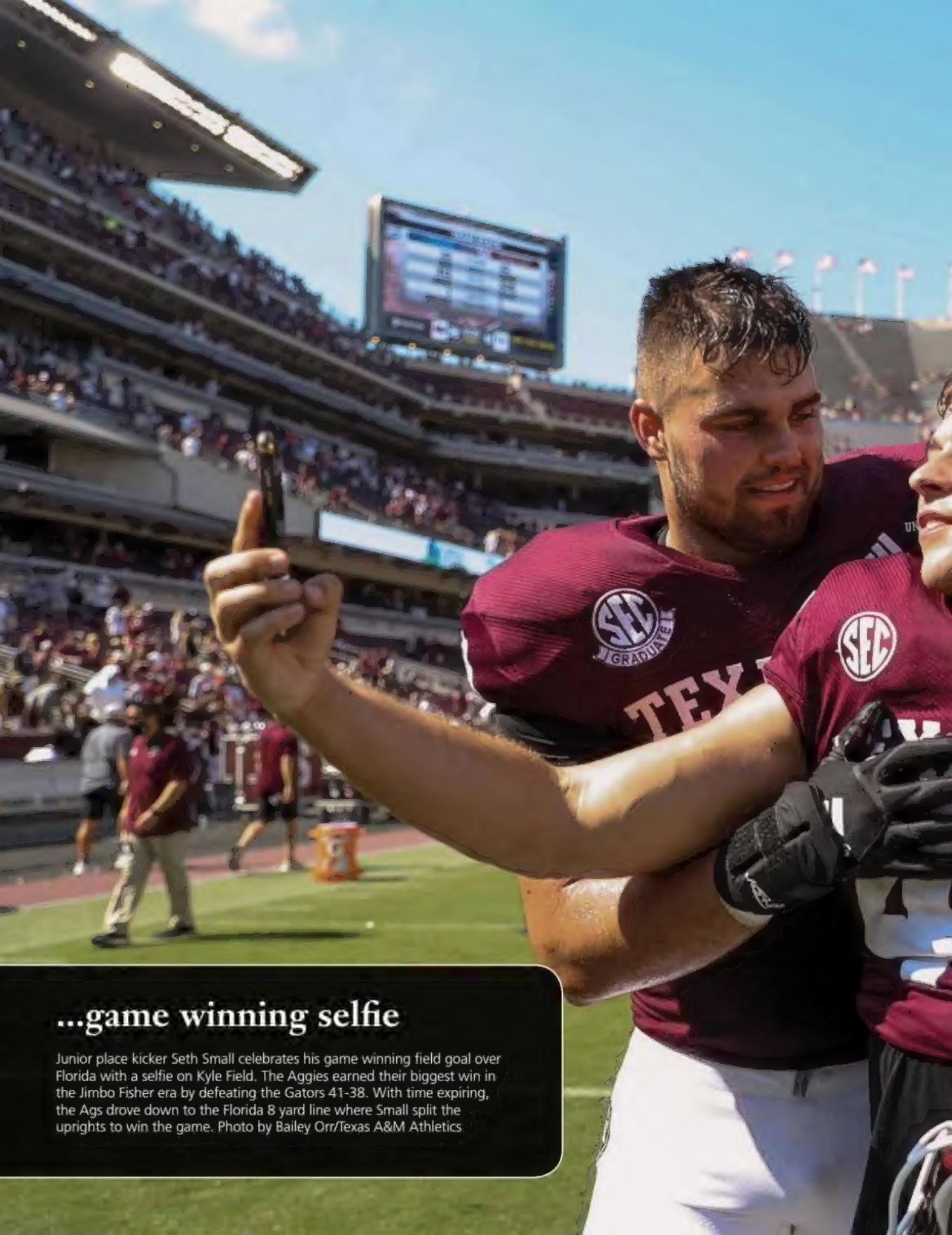




...keeping the spirit alive

Not even COVID-19 could stop the Aggie Yell Leaders and the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band from holding a Yell Practice before our first game. The 12thMan was able to join virtually via live stream as the tradition continued in Kyle Field. Photos by Texas A&M University Division of Marketing & Communications





...game winning selfie

Junior place kicker Seth Small celebrates his game winning field goal over Florida with a selfie on Kyle Field. The Aggies earned their biggest win in the Jimbo Fisher era by defeating the Gators 41-38. With time expiring, the Ags drove down to the Florida 8 yard line where Small split the uprights to win the game. Photo by Bailey Orr/Texas A&M Athletics

snapshot



snapshot





...diving score

Isaiah Spiller finishes off a 75-yard drive with his first of two touchdowns on the day in the victory over Florida. The talented sophomore running back rushed for 174 yards against the Gators in the 41-38 upset win.

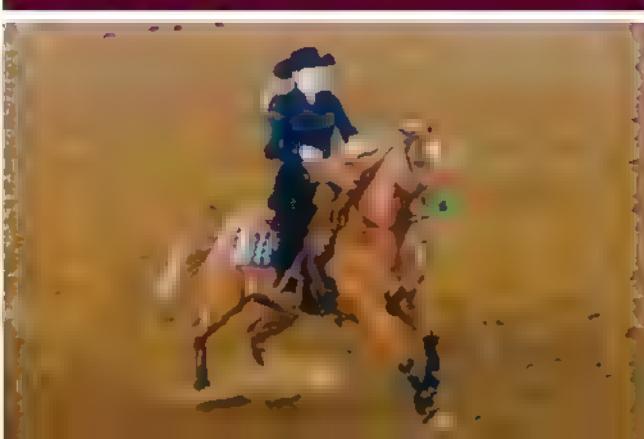
Photo by Craig Bisacre/Texas A&M Athletics



[BASEBALL] The boys of summer had a great fall camp as they battled for the Omaha Cup. The Plowboys dogpiled on the infield as they took down the Farmers in the best of three series 2-0. Chris Weber earned the win after throwing 4 scoreless innings in the deciding game, allowing only one hit and striking out six. Zane Schmidt led the offense going 1 for 2 at the plate with a walk and scoring twice. Bryan Blaum had three RBIs in the series winning game.



[SOCCER] The Aggies are 5-1 heading into the final weekend of regular season play. They are currently ranked #8 in the country and can win a conference championship with two more wins. Senior Addie McCain, who was named Top Drawer Soccer Player of the Month, leads the team in goals. The Aggies have erased some bad memories from previous years by winning at Tennessee and Alabama during their current four-game winning streak. Eight of the team's fourteen goals this season have been scored by freshmen.





[VOLLEYBALL] Texas A&M opened the season with two sweeps as the # 7 Aggies beat LSU at home and then Ole Miss on the road to go 4-0. Senior Camille Conner had 49 assists in game 2 versus LSU. Lauren Davis had 20 kills vs the Tigers. The ladies returned home and dropped two matches against Mississippi State. Treyaunna Rush had 14 kills in the second game against the Bulldogs. The team will wrap up the fall portion of their season against Arkansas on the road.

[CROSS COUNTRY] The Texas A&M Men's Cross Country team had a strong showing in the Gans Creek Classic held in Columbia, Missouri. Paced by redshirt freshman Teddy Radtke, the Ags had five runners finish in the top ten, earning the team a second place finish. The Women's team were led by Grace Flair, and the team finished in fourth place. Both teams competed in the SEC Championships held in Baton Rouge, LA. The men placed ninth in the team standings while the women finished 13th.



[WOMEN'S TENNIS] The women had a strong fall and hosted a couple of events at home as they prepared for the spring season. In the Texas A&M Fall Invite, they had nine wins overall on day 1 and six more on day 2. The Aggies picked up wins over student athletes from Texas State, Rice, Texas and LSU. A&M wrapped up day 3 with five more wins, including one match over Texas Tech.



WE MAKE LOANS, NOT EXCUSES.

Commercial

Personal

Home

citybankonline.com

1409 University Dr. East



City Bank

DEPENDABLE CARS.
DEPENDABLE DEALER.



HONDA

ALLEN HONDA



THE CORNER OF COMFORT • TOLL FREE (866) 860-2424 • WWW.ALLENHONDA.COM

Chicken



EXPRESS

Aggie Owned & Operated

Two Convenient Locations in College Station:

710 Earl Rudder Fwy. S. at University
979-846-7781

12875 Wellborn/FM 2154
979-764-7781

New Location in Bryan:
401 S. Texas Ave at 29th Street
979-823-5222



MEETING THE DENTAL NEEDS OF
**STUDENTS &
FORMER STUDENTS**

- A Conservative Dental Practice -

(979) 846-2098

JDM
DDS

J. Donald McLeroy, D.D.S. '68
Yell Leader • Ross Volunteer • Singing Cadet

4343 Carter Creek Parkway, Suite 105 in Bryan

ADDIE MCCAIN

Q&A

Q1

WHAT WAS IT LIKE BEING BACK ON THE SOCCER FIELD?

It was amazing! I mean, finally getting to play a team other than yourself is obviously different but so exciting, and it brought new challenges. It let us see where we were at and where we continue to grow and get better. Ultimately, it was just exciting, and to be on the road and win 3-0 against a good Ole Miss team was even more exciting. Just promising for the rest of the season.

Q2

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR YOU DURING THIS CORONAVIRUS MESS?

I think it's been not being able to see friends. Not getting to see your parents. I couldn't hug my mom after the game at Ole Miss. Things like that are just kind of a sucky situation, but it is what the world is right now. So we have to deal with it. I think that's the biggest challenge – just limiting who you are around, what you are doing, things like that.

Q3

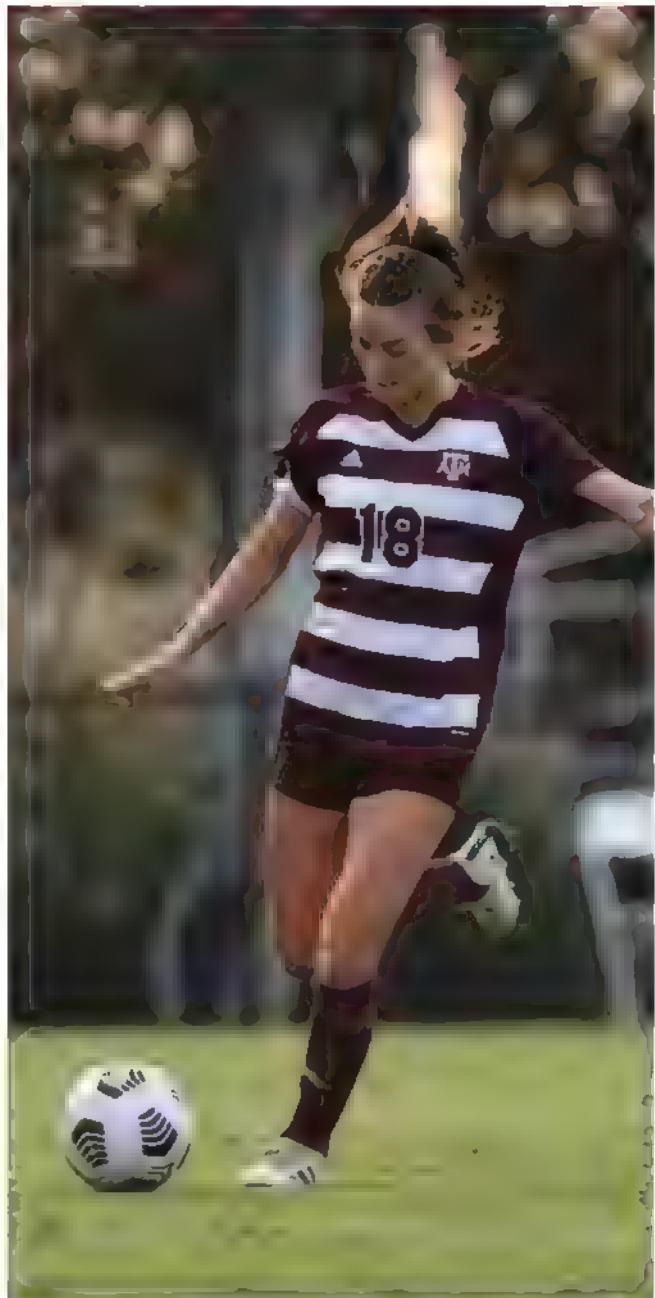
WHAT WERE THE DIFFERENCES ON THE ROAD WITH SAFETY PROTOCOLS?

We had assigned seats on the plane, assigned seats on the bus, – which are things we don't normally have. And you're in a hotel wearing a mask everywhere. I hate the term "new normal" because it's not normal. It's weird and it's uncomfortable, but it's something that we are going to have to get used to for the time right now.

Q4

WHAT HAS MADE YOU STRONGER DURING THIS TIME?

I think just having my teammates, you know? They have been doing so well with the whole Coronavirus thing. Getting to lean on them and see them kind of limit themselves. It's like, "ok I can do that too!" I think just having them and being able to lean on the people that are closest to me has helped a lot.



ERIC GLEWSEY / SOCCERGRAPHY

Q5**YOU HAVE BEEN A CONSISTENT STARTER THE LAST THREE YEARS. HOW HAS YOUR ROLE CHANGED THIS YEAR?**

I think ultimately I wanted just to have a positive attitude, especially with everything that is going on. For the younger people coming in, it can't be fun for them. You know they just get to college and you want to meet people, you want to hang out and do fun things but they can't do any of that right now. I think just having that positive attitude that positive mindset to encourage them that it's worth it to just continue to stay strong and do the right things for now are very important. It will be worth it in the end to win a championship, so I think just being that positive influence and having a good attitude about the uncertainties that we do face will go a long way.

Q6**YOU SCORED FOUR GOALS LAST YEAR, BUT YOU SCORED TWO IN YOUR FIRST GAME. WHAT ARE EVERYBODY'S EXPECTATIONS NOW THAT YOU CAME OUT AND HAD SUCH AN AWESOME GAME?**

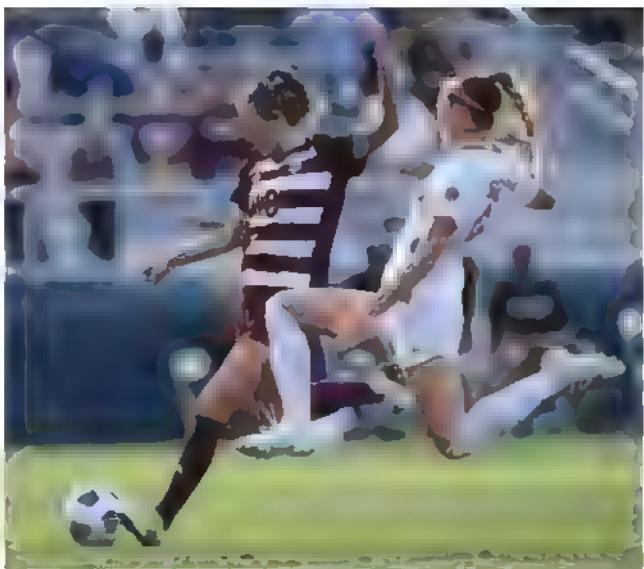
I don't think there are any expectation. You know, we just want to approach each game the same way, have the same mind set, continue to get better every day. We saw in that game we had really, really good moments and then we had really, really poor moments, and so I think just continue to get better at what we do. Keeping possession, playing soccer the right way. The way we know how is exciting and honestly the goal and expectation for anyone and everyone that plays here at Texas A&M.

Q7**WITH THE EXTENDED PERIOD OF PREPARATION DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU WERE MORE PREPARED FOR THIS GAME?**

I didn't feel any more or less prepared. Normally, prior to SEC games you get a few preseason games that are non-conference, so jumping right into an SEC game was nerve-wracking, especially for the younger players. It's just a different feel when you are playing another SEC school. I don't know if we were any more or less prepared. And like I said going on the road and beating an Ole Miss team 3-0 – you can't ask for much more. It was really exciting, and there is a lot to look forward to.

Q8**IN A WAY YOU LADIES HAVE PAVED THE PATH FOR ALL OF OUR PROGRAMS BECAUSE YOU WERE THE FIRST TEAM TO WIN A GAME. DID YOU FEEL AN EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY TO DO THINGS THE RIGHT WAY SO YOU COULD DO THAT?**

I don't think so. If there's a little bit of pressure, you know we get tested three times a week and so it's nerve-wracking. But like I said the team has done so well with it. I think the goal is to stay strong, have a positive attitude, because there a lot of things about the time right now that we can't control. So we just show up every day looking to take on what challenges we might face.



Q9

YOU ARE A COMMUNICATIONS MAJOR. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF SCHOOL?

I think right now the goal is – of course this has nothing to do with communications – I think I'm going to continue to play soccer for a little bit if I'm lucky enough to get that opportunity. And so I'm looking forward to that, and hopefully the opportunity presents itself. If not, I chose communications because it's broad and there are a lot of things you can do. I have thought about coaching. I've thought about a few different things, but I don't know for sure. That's why I want to continue to keep playing until I decide what I want to do forever.

Q10

HAS TAKING ALL OF YOUR CLASSES ONLINE BEEN A DIFFICULT ADJUSTMENT FOR YOU?

Not so much. I have taken a few online classes every semester since I've been here, so it wasn't really anything new. I'm only in minimal hours because I will graduate this December. It hasn't been too hard. I think for a lot of people it's very hard because they like to go to class, they like to be in person, they like to take notes with a pen and paper – the old school way. So it's definitely been an adjustment for a lot of people, but for me personally it hasn't been too bad.

Q11

BEING A SENIOR ARE YOU MORE OF A VOCAL LEADER OR DO YOU LEAD BY EXAMPLE?

I have always been more of a silent leader. This semester I have tried to adapt and grow and be more of a vocal leader, be positive influence and have the best attitude that I can each day.

Q12

DID YOU PLAY OTHER SPORTS GROWING UP?

I did. I played softball pretty competitively, and then in junior high I played volleyball and basketball and a little bit of everything. But then when I got to high school, I focused on soccer.

Q13

TALK ABOUT THE RECRUITING PROCESS AND WHY YOU CHOSE TEXAS A&M.

It was definitely a challenge. I kind of grew up an Aggie. Both my parents and grandparents were Aggies, so it kind of goes way back. We are all Aggies. And so my brother and I always felt destined to be Aggies in a way, but he ended up somewhere else and I ended up in the best place. Although I grew up an Aggie, I wanted to be able to see other things and compare, so I got the opportunity to do that and still found that I would be happiest here. I wouldn't change it.

Q14

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS?

I think honestly winning the SEC Championship my freshman year. That team was so exciting and so fun,

and I got to play with so many great players. I think that it was the most exciting thing that happened over these last three years.

Q15

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN A GAME DURING YOUR AGGIE CAREER?

Hmm. I might honestly have to go back to that SEC championship and Emily Bates scoring the game winner. That was just so exciting.

Q16

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TRADITION AT TEXAS A&M?

I think the 12thMan. I also like the Fish Camp game here at Ellis Field, which goes back to the 12thMan and the atmosphere here. Honestly, at any sporting event they are unreal and it makes the game so much more exciting. And I know if I was on the other team I would definitely be intimidated.

Q17

HOW EXCITED WERE YOU GUYS TO FINALLY KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO GET THE CHANCE TO COMPETE FOR AN SEC CHAMPIONSHIP?

We were so excited! Like I said there were so many things that were uncertain. It's like we are here we are working hard, we have been here since June, we don't want all this hard work to go to waste. It was definitely an exciting moment when they realized we would at least have eight games.

COACH G ON WHAT ADDIE HAS MEANT TO THE PROGRAM:

Addie McCane is just an angel of a person, first and foremost. She's another example of the amazing coincidence that really good kids come from really good families and really good parents. And the upbringing that she had – A. M. is not a coincidence. She was born and raised an Aggie her whole life with people who understood the values that this school has. So as a citizen, and as a person within the fabric of our team chemistry, she has been phenomenal. She sees things in a way that is not just about her. She looks after herself very well but she's also looking out for her teammates all the time. You can see that in the way that she plays. She has been our quarterback of sorts for the three and a half years that she's been here. When the ball comes to her, she's got great vision. She's got an exceptional touch on the ball that can shape passes and move balls, and she has scored some screamers of goals. I remember as much as any the incredible goal she scored against TCU in the NCAA tournament a couple of years ago from about thirty yards. It was a shot from about 25 yards out that went just underneath the cross bar, and it was still rising as it crashed through the net. She is our captain. She's one of our three captains and is one of the most important people in our program for sure.



KYLE FIELD

SAFETY

BY ROB HAVENS '88

The media got the first look ~~last~~ of the safety measures implemented to protect fans as they attend Aggie games at Kyle Field this season. Senior Associate Athletics Director Kevin Hurley led the tour and impressed to the media, "If there's nothing else you get from this tour, the biggest thing is: wear your mask, wash your hands, have hand sanitizer on and be social distanced. All of the guidelines are designed to get us to game two."

A host of people have been working hard for months to allow fans to safely watch their Aggies play football this fall. While the NBA, NHL and Major League Baseball closed their gates and wouldn't allow fans to watch in person, Texas A&M followed the guidance of medical professionals and the CDC.

Help as many fans into Kyle Field as possible.

The media also got to experience what fans will go through on a game day and to hear about all of the new guidelines that have been installed. As we approached the entrance, we were reminded that absolutely no one will be admitted without a face covering mask on. Sanitizing pumps are located as you enter the security area where clear bags are checked by the attendants. There are stickers on the ground to help you social distance as you enter the stadium and "Disneyland ropes" to help you navigate your way to the escalators.

As you board the escalators, there are stickers on the moving handrail to insure social distancing. There are a lot of signs to remind you to social distance, wear your mask properly and





Sanitize your hands. There are sanitizing pumps throughout the stadium to assist you in keeping your hands clean.

Tickets were assigned to allow for social distancing according to the 25% capacity that the State of Texas currently allows. There are 50% less tables in the club area to help the fans social distance. Contactless point-of-sale machines are now being used at concession stands along with plexiglass barriers.

The air conditioners in the club area have been increased so that in an hour the air will be turned over six times, which is the same amount you would experience in a medical facility.

You will be allowed to remove your masks when you eat or drink. But the new rule is that you need to be stationary when you consume your food, so that you are not walking around and eating without a mask. If you are walking around without a mask, a Kyle Field staff member will remind you to put your mask on. If staff continues to have a problem with a fan that won't wear their mask, they do have the ability to remove you from the stadium. If a fan refuses to listen to the direction of

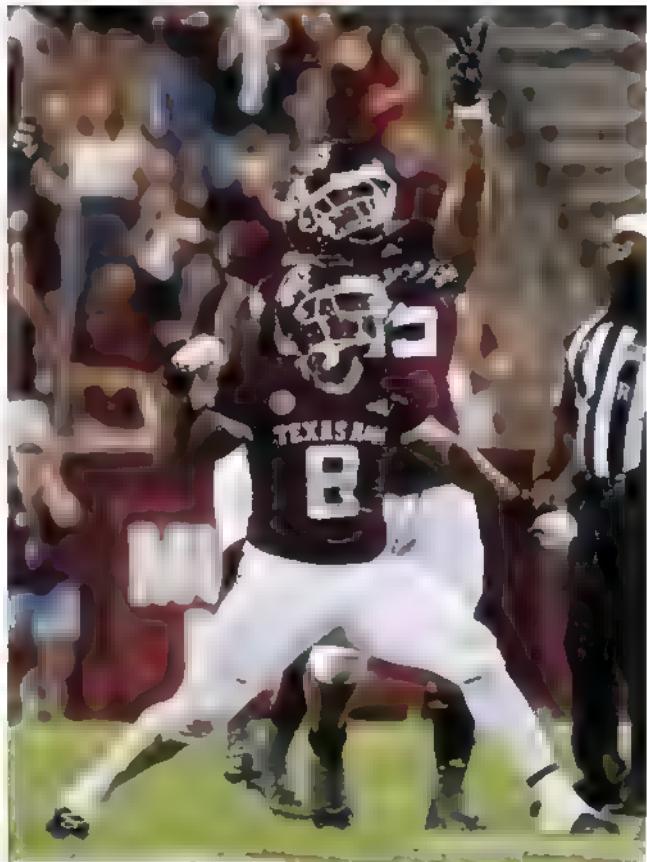
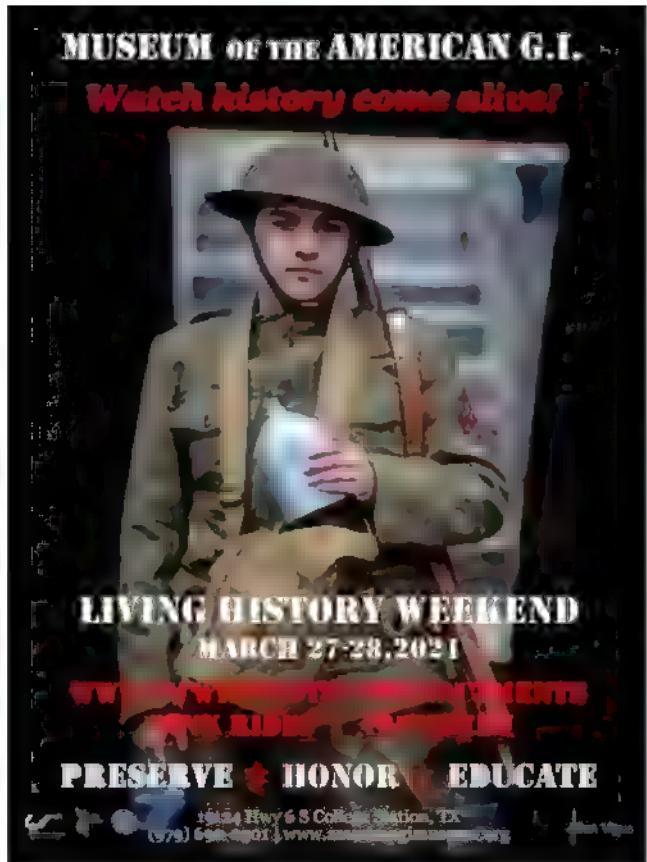
the staff then university police officers will be called on to assist.

On the field, there will be a virtual bubble around the players inside a boxed area on the sideline. Everyone that is allowed in that area has been tested and approved to be there. Yell Leaders will be positioned on platforms in the stands to lead yells this season. The cannon will not be in the stadium this year, but they did bring it in and video it going off so they can show it at the big screen when the Aggies score.

The Fighting Texas Aggie Band will be in the stands but they will not perform on the field during halftime. During the week the band will be taped as they perform their routine and the show will be broadcast on the big screens at the half.

As we wrapped up our tour Harley reiterated "Wear your masks, wash your hands, have hand sanitizer on and be socially distanced!" It will take all of us working together to get through this season and allow the 12th Man to see games in person.





CRAIG BISACRE / TEXAS A&M ATHLETICS



FOOTBALL REWIND 2020

Not long ago, the possibility of not having a 2020 football season seemed like an almost foregone conclusion. Lots of experts out there believed there was no way we would have games, much less fans in the stands to watch them play. We owe a debt of gratitude to SEC commissioner Greg Sankey and the presidents of our conference for leading the way and allowing us to have sports this fall.

It may be a trivia question one day about what conference helped save the 2020 season, and while the ACC and the SEC led the way, the Big XII might be the answer. The Big 10 conference was the first to bail, and the PAC 12 quickly followed suit. But the SEC and ACC stayed the course and the Big XII made the decision to stay on board. The same experts that were convinced we wouldn't have a season believed if the Big XII had opted out that would have been the final straw.

So as our conference trudged safely forward and came up with schedules and safety protocols, we held our breath and prayed we would have college football this fall. While each conference came up with their own plan, the SEC decided to go with a ten-game, conference-only schedule. They looked at the schedule strength and added opponents to each teams schedule to "level" the field.

After a brutal 2019 campaign, the Aggies were licking their chops at the 2020 campaign that included Abilene Christian, North Texas, Fresno State and Colorado. When the smoke cleared and the schedule came out, the Ags had added No 5 Florida and an up and coming Tennessee squad. That was a big upgrade. The notion of playing ten SEC teams was daunting, but at that point we were just happy to know we might get to play football this fall.

It was still unclear if fans would be able to watch the games in person. Texas A&M, based on requirements from the governor, began to prepare for a 50% capacity crowd in Kyle Field. Most skeptics thought there was no way that number of fans would be allowed to watch games in person. The NBA, who became the first domino to fall last spring, came up with a plan to have their players compete in a "bubble" for the better part of three months. The NHL came up with a similar plan. MLB started their season in huge ballparks with absolutely no fans, and the NFL cancelled their preseason games and allowed college football to be the first sport to have fans in attendance.

Austin Peay and Central Arkansas were the first two teams to play in the coronavirus era. With the whole nation watching, and less than 2,000 fans in the stands in Montgomery, Alabama, they showed it could be done. It gave us all hope that not only could college football happen but that college sports in general could happen too. Demonstrating they could play football safely without causing a major outbreak of positive COVID-19 cases afterwards was an important step toward making this season happen.

Other college football teams hit the playing field before us, but our staff was able to put a plan together to safely seat 25% of our stadiums capacity to meet the guidelines approved by the state and the conference. Because of the size of Kyle Field and our great fan base, we generated the largest crowd to watch a football game in person since the Super Bowl!

As part of the SEC safety protocols, our players and staff had routine tests and quarantined those with positive cases. The new normal required three tests a week during a game week. The tough part is that you can do everything right but if your opponent does not your game can be postponed. Our friends just 90 minutes north of us have already experienced several postponements. A game can be postponed on a Monday or a Wednesday and you will know that you aren't going to play that week, but until you get those test results on Friday and the visiting team is boarding the plane, you aren't 100% confirmed that you will be playing on Saturday.

So we held our breath on the week before our opening game vs Vanderbilt and waited to hear the news if both teams would be available to play. Even in his weekly presser Vandy Coach Derek Mason mentioned players that would not be available. So when we saw the tweet that the Commodores were in the air we knew we would have football at Kyle Field the next day.

I know we will never take watching our beloved Aggies play on the gridiron for granted again. When the smoke came on and Coach Fisher led our guys onto the field with Kanye West echoing through Aggieland, there were just a few more goose bumps on my arm getting to see the team I love so well!

No matter what our record is or how successful we are, we all are so grateful for the sacrifices our players and staff and all the behind the scenes folks made to allow this season to happen. ■

GAME 1



TEXAS A&M 17 - VANDERBILT 12

The Aggies opened the 2020 campaign against a defensive-minded opponent installing a new hurry up offense with a new OC. The Dores ate up half of the first quarter clock on their first drive, but the Aggies were able to hold them to only a field goal. The Ags answered later in the quarter with a long drive of their own, going 75 yards in seven plays and Ainius Smith finished off the drive with a 25-yard touchdown run that gave the Aggies a 7-3 lead. The Dores were able to keep the score close all day due to turnovers and some costly mistakes by our special teams. The Aggies gave up a safety on a punt return, due to a block in the back and only led 7-5 at half. Isaiah Spiller took over in the second half and had a big 57-yard carry that set up the second Aggie touchdown which was a 17-yard catch and run by Caleb Chapman. The Aggie defense had two picks in the game. Demani Richardson and Leon O'Neal Jr. were able to stop the Dores with interceptions, and Buddy Johnson and Aaron Hansford led the team in tackles with 11 each.



GAME 2



TEXAS A&M 24 - ALABAMA 52

The Crimson Tide is loaded with the best talent in the country. They have four and five star players that don't even play because they are waiting their turn to take the field behind veteran four and five star players in front of them. You have to play a near perfect game and catch some breaks to beat them. The Aggies looked great in their first series, driving down the field, completing passes, and running the ball against the talented Bama D. But a pair of incomplete passes forced a 37 yard field goal that was no good, and the Tide took only three plays to go 80 yards for the go ahead score. Alabama added another touchdown minutes later to go on top 14-0. The Aggies answered on their next possession as Arianas Smith tight roped down the sideline after a short pass and went 47 yards for the score. The Aggies made a huge defensive play on the next series when DeMarvin Leal corralled a tipped ball in the air and rumbled 43 yards to the Bama 17. One play later Mond found walk-on Ryan Renick up the middle for the tying touchdown. The Aggies failed on a fourth and two pass attempt late in the half and Bama took advantage by scoring three more touchdowns to take a 35-14 lead. Texas A&M added a field goal and a fourth quarter touchdown, but Bama added 17 more points giving them a 52-24 victory.



GAME 3



TEXAS A&M 41 - FLORIDA 38

Kellen Mond had one of his best games as an Aggie in the biggest win of the Jimbo Fisher era at Texas A&M. The victory over the #3 Gators may turn out to be the win that was a turning point for this program. The Aggies have come close under Fisher against some of the top teams. But they finally got over the hump with this win. Mond was 25-35 for 338 yards and three touchdowns. He dissected the Florida secondary and hit two big bombs during the game. The Aggies also found their running game, as Isaiah Spiller rushed for a career high 177 yards and two touchdowns. The Aggie offensive line drove the Gators off the ball and provided great protection for Mond the whole game. Caleb Chapman also had a career high game with 9 catches for 151 yards and two touchdowns. He was the recipient of the two Kellen Mond bombs including a touchdown throw that he hung onto even though he suffered a season ending knee injury on the play. With the game tied at 38 and the Gators driving for the go ahead score. Buddy Johnson made the play of the game and strip tackled Davis giving the Aggies the ball with 3:40 to play. Spiller took the team on his back, and Chase Lane caught a huge 16-yard pass to set up the final play of the game. Seth Small came in and split the uprights with a 26-yard field goal as time expired, giving the Aggies a 41-38 win. Fisher raised his hands in victory as the team dumped a cooler of Gatorade on his head. Victory is sweet!

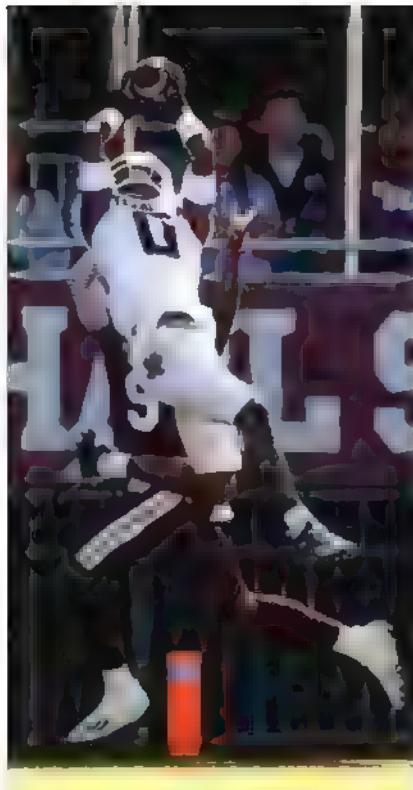


GAME 4



TEXAS A&M 28 - MISSISSIPPI STATE 14

After the huge win over Florida, some experts said the Aggies were prime for a let down. Even Kirk Herbstreit said it didn't make any sense to choose them but neither does anything else in 2020, so he picked the Bulldogs on College Game Day. Starkville has been a tough place for the Aggies to win, and with a veteran qb and the crazy pirate Mike Leach at the helm it was definitely a trap game for the Aggies. Spiller picked up right where he left off against Florida and rushed for 114 yards and two touchdowns in the game. Defensive coordinator Mike Elko dialed up a defensive game plan that locked down the mad pirate's offense. The Aggies ran a three-man front and dropped eight into coverage but were still able to pressure the MSU quarterbacks all game, finishing with six sacks and eight tackles for loss. The Bulldogs had minus two yards rushing and 217 yards of total offense in the contest. Myles Jones had a big interception in the end zone and Chris Russell blocked a punt leading to a one yard scoring run by Spiller. With the Aggies leading 14-0 Emmanuel Forbes got an interception on a deflected pass and returned it 60 yards for a touchdown. The Aggies responded with a four play 75-yard scoring drive to give the Ags a two-score lead. Chase Lane had a 51-yard catch and run touchdown to finish up the drive. Buddy Johnson set up the final score with a strip tackle of Costello, and Jayden Peevy scooped it up to nearly score. Arianas Smith picked up the final touchdown on a six-yard pass from Mond to give the Aggies a 28-14 win on the road.



GAME 5



TEXAS A&M 42 - ARKANSAS 31

The Southwest Classic moved to Kyle Field this year after COVID-19 interrupted the annual game at Jerry World. The Hogs rolled into town with a surprising 2-2 record under new head coach Sam Pittman and new offensive coordinator Kendal Briles. The Aggies were forced to punt on their first series, and Arkansas drove the ball the length of the field on their first possession to go up 7-0. The Aggies answered with a 75-yard drive of their own. They tied up the game when Mond found a sprinting Ainius Smith on the sideline who then tight roped his way into the end zone. The Ags scored 21 unanswered points with a rushing td by Smith and a 6-yard touchdown catch by Wydermyer. The Hogs finally answered with a touchdown, but Isaiah Spiller extended the lead once again with a six-yard rush up the middle, which gave the Aggies a 28-14 lead at half. Wydermyer got his second touchdown of the day when Mond found him in the end zone for a 15 yard score. True freshman Devon Achane scored his first touchdown of his Aggie career when he raced through a nice hole in the line and broke through a tackle into the end zone. Kellen Mond had an outstanding day completing 21 of 26 passes for 260 yards and three touchdowns. Spiller, Smith, Achane and Mond combined to rush for 193 yards on the day. Buddy Johnson led the Aggie defense with 12 tackles.



GAME 6



TEXAS A&M 48 - S CAROLINA 3

The Aggies rolled into Columbia with a ton of momentum. They have owned the series over the Gamecocks since joining the SEC. Before Jimbo came, this would have been the typical trap game that the Aggies could have lost. But the team dominated South Carolina and played the most complete game of the season. They controlled the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball and they imposed their will the whole game. Isaiah Spiller was a workhorse for the Aggies, rushing for 131 yards and gaining another 46 through the air. Mond was 16 for 26 for 224 yards and four touchdowns. Jalen Wydermyer made the most of his day by catching three passes and scoring two touchdowns. True freshman Devon Achane came in for a banged up Spiller and rushed for 65 yards, catching two passes for 70 more. He had one rushing touchdown and another receiving during the game. Seven different receivers caught passes, and eight different Aggies rushed for positive yards. The cherry on top was at the end of the game, when true freshman Haynes King found new tight end Max Wright for a 42-yard touchdown to seal the victory. After the game, Will Muschamp said the Aggies were the best football team the Gamecocks had faced this season.



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

REC SPORTS

STAY HEALTHY
STAY STRONG
STAY MOTIVATED



Visit recsports.tamu.edu to learn more!



Rec Sports
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS



RecSports
recsports.tamu.edu

CLIMBING TEAM

BY ROB HAVENS '88

One of the best things about Texas A&M Sport Clubs is that they offer a wide variety of opportunities for students to follow their passions, get stronger, compete, and build relationships. For members of the Climbing Team, who were previously known as "Craggies," this club delivers in every way.

Club president, Thomas Wong, joined the team his freshman year. "I joined because I had always had an intense passion for climbing and didn't know many people who shared the same zeal. So when I came to Texas A&M and found a community that was way more experienced and twice as passionate about climbing, I knew it was the right place for me!"

The club currently has 20 members but is looking to expand to 30 this semester. Wong told us that this year they utilized stricter tryouts and only allowed members that were climbing at a high level. However, they still recommend students interested in being on the team train and try out.

In climbing competitions, the team competes in short routes called bouldering

or long routes with ropes called sport climbing. Individuals are given an allotted time to climb as many routes as they can and are required to post on a scoring card the number of times they fall before completing the route. The judges assemble the cards and choose the top five male and female climbers who then compete in the final rounds. Based on how they perform, the judges award the top three climbers with gold, silver or bronze medals.

The Climbing Team's main competition is Texas, due to the longtime rivalry. The Aggies were the overall regional team champions in 2019, and since the competition was cancelled in 2020, they are still the reigning

champs over the Longhorns.

We asked Wong what makes a great climber, and he told us that mental and physical endurance is key. "A great climber is smart with his technique, and it takes lots of efficient practice and training to be successful in the sport."

According to Wong, the team is comprised of undergrads, graduate students, students pursuing their PhD, and even students in the veterinary school. COVID-19 has forced the team to make adjustments in their workout schedule, but they are still working hard to prepare to compete.



Rec Sports
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

WRESTLING CLUB

BY ROB HAVENS '88

If you have never had the chance to go watch a wrestling match, I highly recommend it. I'm not talking about the WWE, where guys are bouncing off the ropes or hitting each other with chairs in scripted matches designed to entertain the crowd. I'm talking about collegiate wrestling that involves strategic takedowns, reversals and pins.

Texas A&M's Wrestling Club is a part of the National Collegiate Wrestling Association, and it provides a much-needed outlet for athletes to compete.

The current club has 30–40 members. They compete in two types of meets: team duals and individual tournaments. We asked team president, Ty'rae Carter, how the competitions work. "Team duals are when two teams bet their best lineup forward to have each wrestler in their matched weight class compete against each other. The team that wins the most matches out of each weight class usually ends up with more points, securing the dual win. Individual

tournaments are when a bunch of wrestlers in a weight class are put into a bracket and everyone is wrestling for placement. Similar to how 'March Madness' brackets work, there are seedings and you wrestle someone different in every round."

Carter says the thing that makes a great wrestler is 90% mental toughness. Not only does wrestling require great strength and endurance, but winning requires great technique and strategy.

Carter knows all about what it takes to be a great wrestler as he is an All-American and two-time national champion in the sport. He is the first Aggie to ever accomplish this feat. Most members join the club with at least high school experience in the sport.

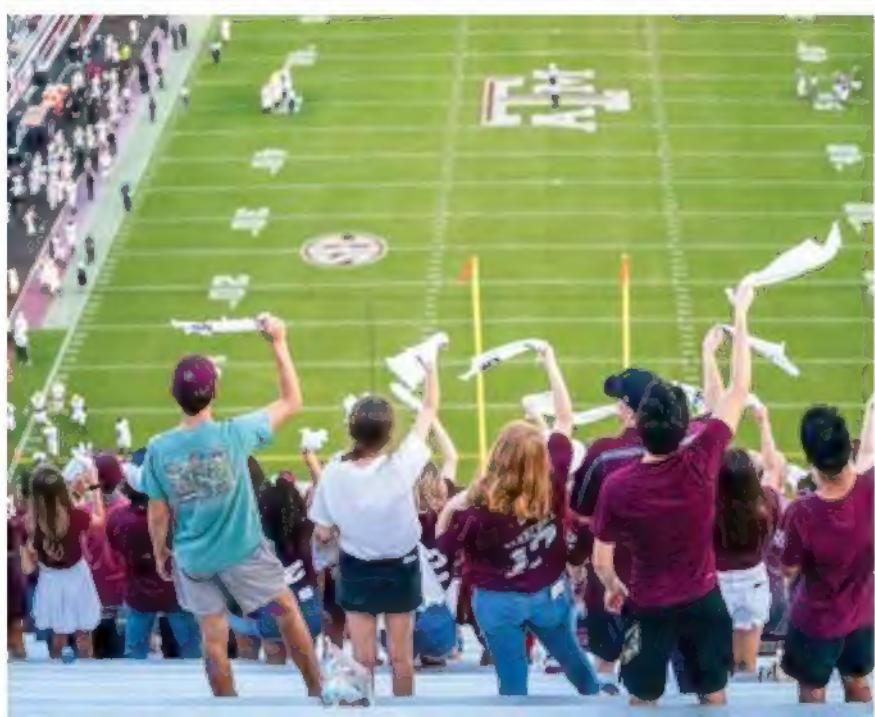
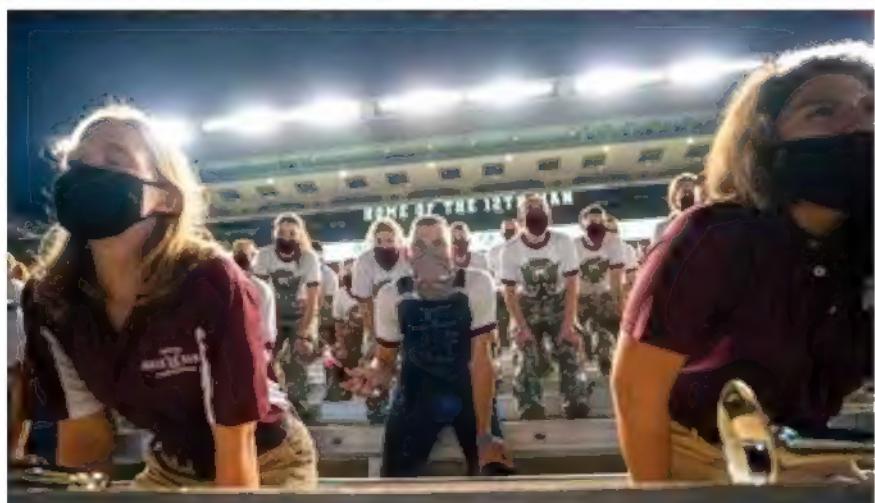
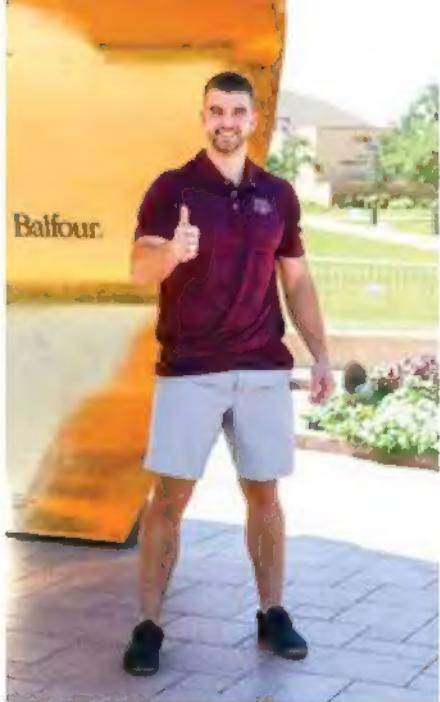
Due to COVID-19, the team can't have a real wrestling practice, but they are continuing to work on conditioning and individual drilling practices. They hope to resume competition in the spring.

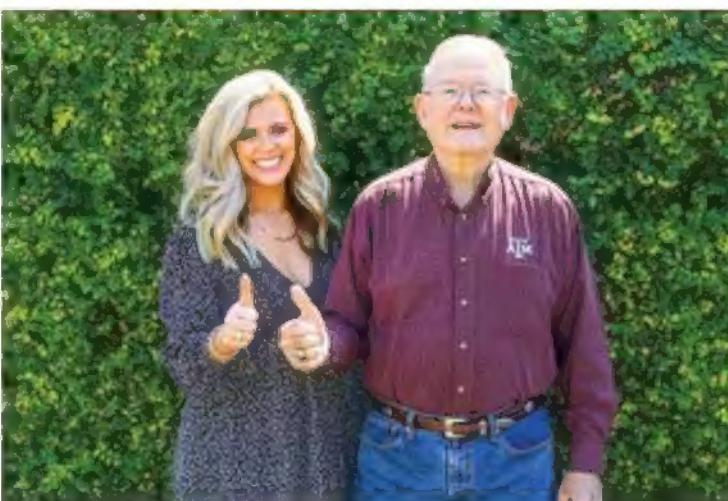
Carter told us that his favorite parts about being on the team are the relationships that are cultivated and the team culture. "Everyone makes it easy to work hard because we find joy in being around each other."

Not only can the matches be grueling, but cutting weight in order to weigh in at the right weight can be very difficult. No matter how they did on the mat that day, the whole team looks forward to hitting a nice restaurant afterwards so they can eat whatever they want.



the12thman





Aggieland

ILLUSTRATED

PO BOX 6841 • BRYAN, TX 77805-6841
979-229-8046

www.aggiemag.com



Follow **@aggiemag** on Twitter or fan
Aggieland Illustrated on Facebook
to be eligible to win tickets to Texas A&M
sporting events and other great prizes!

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

PRSRT STD
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 69
COLLEGE STATION, TX



PARAGON
FINANCIAL ADVISORS

FEE-ONLY WEALTH MANAGEMENT YOU CAN TRUST



WWW.PARAGON-ADV.COM | 979-693-3907

215 ROCK PRAIRIE ROAD COLLEGE STATION, TX 77845

FIND US ON: